

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are pending in this Application. Claims 1 and 12 have been amended. Applicant reserves the right, however, to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications. In view of the amendments to the claims and the remarks below, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Claims 1-5, and 8-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2003/0233507 to Yu et al. ("Yu") in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,075,793¹ to Le et al. ("Le"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 describes a card access apparatus that is adapted to be connected to a plurality of types of cards and recites, among other things, that "when one type of the types of cards is inserted in [its] slot and connected to one of the connection points adapted for said one type of the types of cards, at least one of the signal buses connected to at least one of the connection points adapted for at least one other type of the types of cards is electrically isolated from said at least one of the connection points" and that "data is exchanged between the inserted card and the slot through the one of the connection points adapted for said one type of the types of cards in an opening part in the slot, the opening part having the plurality of connection points." The cited references do not teach or suggest these features of claim 1.

Neither of the references teach or suggest electrically isolating a connection point from its own signal bus (i.e., a signal bus connected to the connection point). Claim 1 recites an apparatus configured such that, when a card is inserted into the slot and connected to one of its corresponding connection points, "one of the signal buses connected to at least one of the connection points adapted for at least one other type of the types of cards is electrically isolated from said at least one of the connection points." It is important to note that it is one of the other type connection points is electrically isolated from its own signal bus ("one of the signal buses connected to the at least one of the connection points . . . is electrically isolated from said at least

¹ Though the Office Action cites U.S. Patent No. 8,075,793, Applicant has assumed that the intended reference was 7,075,793, which lists Le as the first inventor.

one of the connection points”). In other words, when a card is inserted and connected to a first connection point, a second connection point is electrically isolated from the signal bus that is connected to that second connection point.

The electrical isolation of an “other type” connection point from its own signal bus is described, for example, at page 11, lines 2-21. Here, the specification explains that, for example, when an MS Duo card is attached, the SD connection points are isolated from the SD data signal buses, and the xD connection points are isolated from the xD data signal buses. When isolated, the other connection points cannot send signals over their respective buses.

Yu describes a system with multiple interface ports (11, 14 in Figure 1), which are physically separated from each other. See Yu at [0016]-[0017]. Yu does not, however, describe “electrically isolating” a signal bus for a particular connection point from that particular connection point. While the different interface ports may be electrically isolated from one another, there is no apparent reason that Yu’s signal buses would be isolated from their own respective connection points.

Le describes an apparatus capable of reading different types of memory cards using a single slot. By configuring the slot with certain physical barriers as shown in FIGS. 8, 10, and 11, memory cards of a certain size will make contact with only one type of connection point 126A, 126B, 126C. While this provides a card slot capable of using multiple types of cards, it does not solve the short circuiting problem that is solved by the claimed apparatus.

Specifically, Le does not teach or suggest that a connection point is “electrically isolated” from its own signal bus when another type of card is inserted. Le’s connection points may be electrically isolated from each other, but there is no description of electrically isolating any connection point from a signal bus that is connected to that connection point. Accordingly, Le does not teach or suggest that “[a] signal bus connected to at least one of the connection points adapted for at least one other type of the types of cards is electrically isolated from said at least one of the connection points.”

Moreover, the claims have been amended to clarify that data is exchanged between the inserted card and the slot through a corresponding connection point in an opening part in the slot, and that the opening part has a plurality of connection points. Le teaches connection points that are located in different places of the slot, and does not describe one opening part in the slot with a plurality of connection points.

For at least these reasons, claim 1 is allowable over the prior art of record. Claims 2-5 and 8-12 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. .

Claims 6 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Yu in view Le and further in view of U.S. Application No. 2002/0046877 to Hirari et al. ("Hirari").

Claims 6 and 7 depend from claim 1 and include all limitations of claim 1. As described above, claim 1 is allowable over Yu and Jones, and Hirari does not add anything to cure the deficiencies of Yu with respect to claim 1. Hirari describes a CF card casing with a slot that accepts only CF cards. Hirari Abstract; Figure 1. Among other things, Hirari does not describe that "when one type of the types of cards is inserted in the slot and connected to one of the connection points adapted for said one type of the types of cards, at least one of the signal buses connected to at least one of the connection points adapted for at least one other type of the types of cards is electrically isolated from said at least one of the connection points." Claims 6 and 7 are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

In view of the above, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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